

## Empire against Exclusion in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Trans-Pacific History

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### Introduction

I'm going to begin with an historical puzzle: why was Daniel Augustus Tompkins, Gilded Age textile baron from North Carolina, an opponent of Chinese exclusion? The owner of three cotton mills and a New South booster-editor, Tompkins presided over a vast, racially segregated labor force and had much to say about the necessity of white supremacy for the progress of the South, the nation and the world.<sup>1</sup> So why, on March 14, 1906, did he testify before the U. S. House of Representatives' Committee on Foreign Affairs, expressing his opposition to immigration officials' over-zealous enforcement of legal barriers against Chinese immigration? Existing approaches to histories of race and migration, which have emphasized the interchangeability of anti-black and anti-Chinese racisms, don't give us especially good tools for making sense of Tompkins' actions: they would lead us to expect that Tompkins would defend both totalized Chinese exclusion and black subordination on similar racial grounds.<sup>2</sup> What I'm going to do today is to offer a new framework for conceptualizing the history of the United States in the world that, among other things, will make this seemingly unlikely intervention by a New South industrialist and racial ideologue in U. S. immigration politics understandable. It's a framework that requires us to bring together two traditionally separated fields of inquiry, migration history and imperial history. What I'm hoping to demonstrate today is the value--indeed, the necessity --of connecting these two approaches in our efforts to write the history of the United States in a global context.<sup>3</sup>

Before proceeding, it might be worth reviewing, in broad terms, some key developments in scholarship over the past two decades. Beginning in the 1990s, and accelerating in the 2000s, U. S. historians began calling for the writing of histories "beyond the nation-state." What would such a scholarship look like? The answers were rich, multiple and contradictory, but they converged around a critique of American exceptionalism and U. S. historians' complicity in it, and the idea of the nation as the naturalized, unquestioned "container" of both historical processes and historical scholarship.<sup>4</sup> Over the last decade, new research has developed in response to these manifestoes, often under the banner of "trans-

national” history: impressively diverse, it has begun to chart new shapes and scales of history that, to varying degrees, resist both ideologies of exceptionalism and the gravitational pull of the “nation” as the exclusive frame for the historical imagination. Among the paradigmatic subjects of “transnational” history were immigrants and social movements. Where nation-framed history tended to cast immigrants’ journeys as one-way transits on a vindicating path of “assimilation,” submerged itineraries now surfaced that featured stopovers and return migrations, and struggles to preserve long-distance connections to home cultures, institutions and modes of identification in often hostile new contexts.<sup>5</sup> Social movements, once assumed both to cleave to national limits and to indicate the exceptional character of American politics, were reconceived as outward-looking: embedded, even in the act of reforming the nation-state, in thick and thin globalizing networks of solidarity, inspiration, emulation and competition, and in which creative, cross-national reading and misreading emerged as a critical, and newly visible, dynamic in the making of national politics.<sup>6</sup>

One decade into it, there can be no doubting the tremendous and positive impact of the “transnational turn” in broadening historical visions. But it is also undeniable that some of the limits of the “transnational” as a way to conceptualize larger-than-national histories have become clear. For some, the term itself seemed to reify the “nation” as the sole institution whose transcendence was to be pursued in history and historiography. Others asked how useful it was across historical time: how much “transnational” history was there before the rise of the nation-state? Still others wondered whether transnational historians, in depicting fluid, trans-border processes, downplayed or neglected the power of nation-states as historical structures. Transnational history also came weighed down with unspoken moral connotations: it had a tendency not only to discuss but to celebrate the fact of flows and connections across national boundaries, a choice unwittingly reinforced by a preference for sympathetic protagonists. It was usually clear who the hero was in the imagined battle between global flows and national borders.

These dissatisfactions are prompting scholars to explore alternative frameworks for broadening the study of U. S. history. One of those, and to me one of the most promising in addressing some of transnational history’s limitations, is imperial history. Using the “imperial” to talk about the United States is, of course, not new, and it has never been uncontroversial. Denying the United States the status of “empire” has long been a staple of exceptionalist history-writing, as well as American political culture at large. And when scholars have used the term, they have done so narrowly (to refer only to “formal” colonial rule after 1898), rigidly (as with the idea of the United States as a transhistorical “informal empire”), or sporadically (especially as a warning cry during times of moral-political crisis). This said, the “imperial” answers some of the charges laid at the door of the “transnational.” Like transnational history, imperial history is, at its best, connective history that narrates and analyzes the enmeshing of societies. But unlike transnational history, which draws heavily on languages of freedom,

liberation and transcendence, imperial history emphasizes the way power is exercised through long-distance connections. It avoids the moralized dichotomy between borders and flows by focusing attention on the ways that states and economic enterprises have shaped the global environment in the pursuit of power and profit, and transformed “domestic” settings in order to align them with these goals.<sup>7</sup>

Take, for example, the difference between transnational and imperial histories of migration. Transnational accounts have typically, and insightfully, counterposed the agency of migrants seeking to move between national spaces, and the totalized, exclusionary structures built by national-territorial states to block them. Imperial histories, by contrast, pay attention not only to states’ efforts to define and defend their territorial borders, but to the ways migration intersects with states’ attempts to exercise power beyond them. One might say that imperial histories of migration give mobility not just to migrants, but to states and the forces of capital. Such histories also open to the ways that imperial states and corporations sought to cultivate and discipline--as well as prevent--cross-border migration when it was perceived to be in their interests which brings me back to Daniel Tompkins and his testimony. Viewed through the imperial approach I’ve outlined, it becomes clear what he was up to in 1906 when he opposed the total exclusion of the Chinese. An estimated one-half of North Carolina’s cotton production was exported abroad, three-quarters of these exports went to China, and cotton exports to China depended on the back-and-forth movements of Chinese merchants.<sup>8</sup> Speaking to the House Committee, Tompkins spoke stridently for the ongoing barring of Chinese “coolies,” but he also called for “rules and regulations for the travel of that upper class of China, for the social and commercial intercourse of that upper class with our people...” Tompkins’ call for sharper legal distinctions between barred “coolies” and permitted merchants was a response to changes in U. S. immigration policy: since 1897, U. S. officials had collapsed this distinction, tightening their enforcement of restriction and harassing and deporting Chinese migrants with certified exemptions, including many merchants and students. Starting in 1905, a massive boycott of U. S. products led by Chinese merchants and students throughout the diaspora had seized Americans’ attentions. Industrialists like Tompkins, whose mental world connected China’s treaty ports and North Carolina’s mills, proved willing to make public arguments for Chinese migration--specifically, for the migration of merchant elites--on the unsentimental grounds of commercial empire. “We would not be here if we did not think it interfered with American trade,” he said.<sup>9</sup>

From this starting point, I’m going to use the lens of imperial history to re-examine the politics of Chinese migration and exclusion in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries more broadly.<sup>10</sup> Viewed from this angle, the story shifts dramatically and one critical element rises into view: the class-based exemptions to Chinese exclusion which Tompkins was defending, and which are usually mentioned only

in passing in most existing accounts.<sup>11</sup> From their very beginning, U. S. laws aimed at dramatically curtailing Chinese immigration did not exclude all Chinese people from denizenship. Indeed, it was telling that the 1882 law usually known to historians as the Chinese Exclusion Act was, at the time, initially referred to as the Chinese Restriction Act.<sup>12</sup> (Accordingly, in this talk, I'll be using the term "exclusion" to refer to a total bar to entry, and "restriction" to refer to a severe but still partial bar to entry.) Among the law's stipulations were entry rights given to merchants, students, teachers and tourists, the "exempt classes," as they were called. These small but significant holes, what I'll call imperial openings, permitted 84,115 people to migrate legally between China and the United States during the period usually called the "exclusion era."<sup>13</sup> These legal breaches existed, I'll argue, because empire-builders in both China and the United States in different ways freighted these social groups with geopolitical significance, as the means to advance their respective states' power. An emphasis on the "exempt classes" may compel historians to rethink not only the history of Chinese immigration politics, but some of the basic concepts used to make sense of modern boundary-making regimes. While the metaphor of a "wall" is often used to describe these policies, for example, exemption suggests that a better metaphor might be a "filter" whose gaps were carefully calibrated and relentlessly policed. I want to be clear that I'm not arguing that these laws were any less racist than they are usually understood to be. It was rather that they were more imperial, shaped not only by the essentializing hatreds of white nativists but by the agendas of those seeking to conquer China itself, who saw risks in totalized exclusion and possibilities in highly selective restriction. The fact that the "exempt classes" were far from exempt from racialized restriction in American law and violence and marginalization in civil society makes their exemption from bars on migration and denizenship all the more striking and worthy of historical attention.

Fundamentally, the story I'm telling today is about conflicts over how the so-called Open Door (through which Americans hoped to gain access to China) ought to be connected to the Golden Gate (through which Americans controlled Asian migrants' access to the United States). Where it was possible, U. S. diplomats, exporters and missionaries hoped to keep these doors swinging on completely different hinges, so that empire might be compatible with exclusion. (As Tompkins put it, the United States should "regulate our commercial relations with China so as not to entangle ourselves in this question of excluding Chinese labor at all, so far as that is possible."<sup>14</sup>) But these actors also anticipated--and were sometimes forcibly reminded by the Chinese--that a total closure of the door at San Francisco might lead to a slamming shut of the door at Shanghai. Their politically successful response, exemplified by the presentations by Tomkins and his colleagues, was to crack open the rapidly closing Golden Gate in the interests of trans-Pacific empire. This was what I'll call the politics of imperial anti-exclusion: the selective and hierarchical incorporation of foreign populations as a

function of state and corporate efforts to project global power.<sup>15</sup>

### **I. The Oldest Empire and the Newest**

China and the United States in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century were both comparable and connected. While anti-Chinese exclusionists would attempt to distinguish and separate the United States and China across a bottomless, Orientalist abyss, there were very rough similarities between what one missionary author called “The Oldest and the Newest Empire.”<sup>16</sup> Both China and the United States were sprawling land-based and commercial empires with exceptionalist self-conceptions, underdeveloped systems of diplomacy, and variants of status anxiety with respect to the European imperial core: the United States for its republicanism, political corruption and racial impurity, China for its non-Christianity and world-historic slide from the center of global power.<sup>17</sup>

The two empires’ histories were also woven together in relations of domination. The United States took full advantage of unequal treaties that secured Americans legal sovereignty and unfettered commercial access in selected Chinese port cities.<sup>18</sup> While U. S. corporations exported flour, kerosene and, especially cotton textiles, Protestant missionaries leveraged their exemption from Chinese jurisdiction to establish schools and mission stations in the hopes of toppling heathenism for Christ.<sup>19</sup> Finally, the United States had the power to draw on Chinese labor.<sup>20</sup> When, in 1868, a Chinese diplomatic mission working with Anson Burlingame negotiated a reciprocal, open migration treaty between China and the United States, it represented a triumph for China’s international recognition, but it also meant victory for U. S. employers of Chinese labor.<sup>21</sup> Facing insatiable labor demands, American employers advanced the first iteration of imperial anti-exclusion. Here proponents of Chinese immigration cast it as an essential element of continental westward colonization: without the labor power, technical skills and entrepreneurial acumen of the Chinese, it was maintained, the Western portions of North America would remain a desolate, under-populated waste region unattractive to Euro-American “settlers.”<sup>22</sup> You needed the Chinese, in other words, if you wanted California to be white. This was the voice of labor contractors and employers, but also of Protestant missionaries. If, for many missionaries, God had apparently made a huge geographic mistake by placing something like one half of humanity--the “heathen,” Asian half--on the other side of the world’s largest ocean from the American and European base of the one true faith, Chinese migration to the United States was, far from a problem, a providential correction.<sup>23</sup>

By the late-1870s, these imperial voices in defense of Chinese immigration rose in volume against a vocal anti-Chinese exclusionist movement anchored on the West Coast, but with growing national resonance. Exclusionists wired together racialized republican critiques of industrial capitalism and earlier debates on the status of Asian “coolies,” emerging with a racial-exclusionist ideology that

conflated Chinese migrants, coerced labor, racial impurity and contagious unfreedom.<sup>24</sup> Their political mobilizations stoked political and economic anxieties (that white workers, the backbone of the Republic, would be replaced by under-consuming Chinese workers) and civilizational fears (the risks Chinese immigration posed to white American morality and racial-sexual purity).<sup>25</sup> Increasingly, they made their power felt both in brutal mob violence against Chinese communities in the West, and in state and national electoral politics.

In response to nativist mobilizations, President Hayes sent new diplomatic missions to explore the possibility of revising the U. S. treaty with China to allow for restriction of some kind. In October 1880, a mission led by James B. Angell, president of the University of Michigan, pressed Chinese diplomats to give the United States a free hand in granting immigration rights. When this was refused, they advanced a treaty draft that permitted the U. S. to “regulate, limit, suspend, or prohibit” the “coming of laborers” but which exempted merchants, travelers, teachers and students; a “laborer” was defined as anyone not in these exempted categories. Chinese diplomats pushed back, insisting that artisans were not “laborers,” that restriction be limited to California, and giving the Qing government veto power over U. S. enactments on Chinese immigration. But they soon settled on an agreement that granted American authorities unilateral power to restrict--but not exclude--Chinese immigration, as long as such restrictions were “reasonable” and communicated to the Qing government.

Ratified by the Senate in May 1881, the Angell Treaty granted the U. S. government the right to “regulate, limit or suspend” the in-migration of laborers, “other classes not being included in the limitation.” It stated that immigrants would not be subject to abuse or harassment. Teachers, students, merchants and travelers “from curiosity” along with their household and body servants, were to be “permitted to go and come of their own free will and accord.”<sup>26</sup>

Congress did not wait long to act. President Arthur vetoed a first bill barring Chinese laborers for 20 years on the grounds of its extreme duration, but signed into law a second bill lasting a presumably more reasonable 10 years. The May 6, 1882 act, informally known at the time as the “Chinese Restriction Act,” barred “laborers” and required members of the “exempt classes” to obtain special certificates--known as Section 6 certificates--to allow them to travel. That is to say, the 1882 act was simultaneously a harsh prohibition and a grant of permission: a “restriction” law, strictly speaking, rather than an “exclusion” law.<sup>27</sup>

It makes little sense to identify this law as an exercise in either “race” or “class” politics, understood as mutually exclusive modes of power. It was both race and class legislation, marking a class division that applied only to the Chinese, defined as a racialized descent group. The most appropriate way of describing the nature of the law--at the intersection of race and class--is to say that it registered a distinction of “civilization,” permitting the transit of “civilized” and “civilizing” elements within the Chinese population, while barring those vaster populations whose lack of “civilization” was thought to pose a threat to the United States.



## II. Exempt Classes

Between the 1882 act implementing the Angell Treaty and its 1943 “repeal,” tens of thousands of elite Chinese migrants (and those who successfully pretended to be elite) managed to enter the United States through openings--often very sharp openings--in U. S. immigration law. Immigration statistics record that between 1894 and 1940, 84,115 members of the “exempt classes” entered the United States, comprising 34% of the 248,298 legal Chinese entrants during this period.<sup>28</sup> These figures indicate the extent to which U. S. policies constituted not a wall but a filter, permeable by design to those who reached the strict but elusive bar of “civilization.”

Unsurprisingly, questions of class definition surfaced repeatedly as troubling elements of Chinese-American diplomacy. The world’s identities and employments did not neatly funnel into the categories of laborer, student, teacher and merchant, and traveler “from curiosity.”<sup>29</sup> These were all slippery categories (I’m especially intrigued to learn what the U. S. government’s metric of sufficient “curiosity” was), and they were contingent and changeable in individuals’ lives. In the move from legislation to enforcement, these were potentially explosive ambiguities.

One defining element of the politics of exemption was gender. Into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the “exempt classes” were presumed to be male by both U. S. officials and the courts. But policies also permitted the entry of the wives and daughters of the “exempted.” Between 1910 and 1924, 35% of the 8,986 Chinese women admitted to the United States were either the wives or daughters of “exempt” men (the rest either U. S. citizens or the wives or daughters of re-entering laborers). This built a heterosexual norm into exemption and vice versa: the exempted were understood to be “civilized,” in part, where they were seen to conform to norms of domesticity and heterosexuality, in stark contrast with both popular imaginings of “lewd,” unattached Chinese women and immoral, “bachelor” communities of Chinese men.<sup>30</sup>

Why did Chinese officials concede to “civilized” restriction, initially in the Angell Treaty and later in the still more restrictive Gresham-Yang Treaty in 1894? First, there is the matter of China’s extremely weak bargaining position: after all, Chinese diplomats were negotiating with a state that already exercised legal sovereignty over key corners of its own territory. And Qing officials felt they needed an ally in the United States, a “lesser barbarian” to balance against the “greater barbarians” that pressed in on it, especially Britain, Russia, and Japan. It helped that the United States was committed to China’s territorial integrity, unlike its rivals.<sup>31</sup> This meant that, when it came to migration politics, Chinese negotiators could only push so far.

Second, Chinese restriction was a many-headed hydra, and Chinese officials faced the dilemma of deciding which of its heads to strike at: they strove to gain

legal and police protection for migrants, to win indemnity payments in instances of violence or official abuse, to lessen the overall duration of restriction laws, and to protect the transit rights of all migrants, all in a context in which the Chinese diplomatic presence itself was novel, initially inexperienced and over-stretched. (The first Chinese ministers assigned to the United States were also tasked with Cuba and Peru.)<sup>32</sup>

Third, though, were changing perceptions of migrants and class politics among Qing officials. Into the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the Qing empire barred outmigration, seeing emigrants disloyal, deculturated and potentially revolutionary. This fact had not, of course, prevented the development of a vast Chinese diaspora throughout Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, stretching as far as North America, the Caribbean and Southern Africa, although notably the state had not trailed those migrants with consuls and diplomatic protection: until the late-1870s, the Middle Kingdom did not send delegations; it received them. But official attitudes were changing: as China struggled to defend its standing in the international order, the fact that its migrants could be exploited and attacked with impunity became symbolic of the Qing state's larger weakness and subordination. And a rising generation of scholar-diplomats was developing a new, affirmative vision of migrants: workers sent home remittances, merchants accumulated capital for Chinese development, students learned modern techniques and technologies. Migrants, in other words, could aid rather than threaten empire.<sup>33</sup>

Of these groups, workers were the most dispensable in official imaginings: they were the least powerful in China itself and, when it came to the cultural politics of international recognition, they were often seen as a liability as China tried to project a "civilized" image abroad. Even as they defended Chinese-American communities from a hostile, racist American world, Chinese consuls in the United States aggressively moralized working-class Chinese communities, cooperated with American police forces to suppress "immorality" (such as opium dens) and deported indigent and/or criminal elements among the Chinese population.

The Chinese minister to the United States in the late-1890s and early-1900s, Wu Ting-Fang, made the official Chinese case for "civilized" restriction--the permitting of elite Chinese migration and the restriction of "laborers"--in a July 1900 essay entitled "Mutual Helpfulness between China and the United States." "If [Americans] think it desirable to keep out the objectionable class of Chinese," he wrote, "by all means let them do so." The problem for Wu was that U. S. officials failed to "discriminate between the worthy and the unworthy." As a result, "the respectable merchants had been frequently turned back, whereas the Chinese high-binders, the riffraff and scum of the nation, fugitives from justice and adventurers of all types" gained admission. "Would it not be fairer," he asked, "to exclude the illiterate and degenerate of all nations rather than to make an arbitrary ruling against the Chinese alone?"<sup>34</sup>



Wu was responding to a sudden, exclusionary shift in the enforcement of U. S. immigration laws that had begun with President McKinley's 1897 appointment to the position of Commissioner of Immigration of Terence Powderly, a former leader of the Knights of Labor with close ties to the exclusionist movement. Both Powderly and his successor, Frank Sargent, would use new administrative rulings to turn Chinese restriction into thoroughgoing Chinese exclusion: filters into walls. They instructed officials to scrutinize Section 6 exemption certificates with new rigor and suspicion, erring on the side of expulsion. They were to subject migrants to ruthless inspections and interrogations, including the humiliating body-measurement system known as the Bertillon system that required migrants to strip naked. In the wake of Powderly's appointment, exemption collapsed; the numbers of successful Chinese admissions plummeted.<sup>35</sup>

Chinese migrants had, by 1897, refused to submit to oppressive, restrictionist laws and policies, challenging them in court, cleverly subverting them, and openly refusing to comply with them.<sup>36</sup> But the Powderly-Sargent regime appears to have represented an especially painful assault, subjecting even the most powerful, wealthy, connected and Western-educated to harassment and deportation. The kinds of objections this prompted were represented in a 1908 pamphlet by Ng Poon Chew, editor San Francisco's *Sai Yat Po*, entitled "The Treatment of the Exempt Classes of Chinese in the United States." In it, he railed against officials' degrading assault on those permitted legal entry into the United States. He quoted the Secretary of Commerce and Labor affirmatively to the effect that it had never been the government's purpose "to exclude persons of the Chinese race merely because they are Chinese, regardless of the class to which they belong, and without reference to their age, sex, culture or occupation, or the object of their coming or their length of stay." It had been, rather, "to exclude a particular and well defined class..." Yet Chinese migrants, high and low alike, were being incarcerated while their cases were pending in the cramped, unsanitary "detention shed" on the San Francisco wharf, often resulting in illness or even death. In making his case for the restoration of class-based restriction, Ng invoked the threat of Chinese economic retaliation against the United States: "Americans desire to build up a large trade with the Orient," he wrote, "but they can scarcely expect to succeed if the United States Government continues to sanction the illegal and unfriendly treatment of Chinese subjects." As the Americans had learned all too well by 1908, such policies could have what Ng called "irritating consequences."<sup>37</sup>

### III. The Profit of Broad-Mindedness

By the time Ng penned these words, this particular line of argument--that the wrong kinds of Chinese restriction would jeopardize U. S. commercial empire in China--were three decades old in the United States. Launched as early as the first waves of Chinese exclusionist politics, it comprised a second iteration of imperial anti-exclusion.<sup>38</sup> Advanced by U. S. diplomats, missionaries, educators and power-

ful exporting agricultural and industrial interests--and focused by the lobbying efforts of the American Asiatic Association (AAA), an organization consisting of U. S. exporters to East Asia, this new imperial anti-exclusion reflected late-19<sup>th</sup> century structures of empire, characterized not by the question of labor power and the infrastructural colonization of North America, but the projection of U. S. market, military and colonial power in Asia and the Pacific.<sup>39</sup> It held out little if any support for the migration rights of Chinese laborers, except to the extent that restricting them might alienate powerful Chinese agents. Instead, it centered on the cultivation, education and disciplining of elites through their facilitated, back-and-forth movements between Asia and the United States: an empire of migrants more supple, stable and invisible than an empire of territories.<sup>40</sup> By fomenting such migrations, the U. S. might accrue what the *Wall Street Journal* called, in praise of Chinese students' education in the United States, "the profit of broad-mindedness."<sup>41</sup>

This formulation, articulated in countless Congressional hearings, editorials and, especially, the pages of the journal of the AAA, depended upon two distinct but interlocking understandings of empire and migration. The first involved diffusion: the exempt classes must continue to be exempt because Chinese merchants, students, teachers and tourists would serve as agents for the spread of American goods, beliefs, practices and institutions in China itself. Merchants closed out of American warehouses and showrooms by exclusion laws, and engineering students restricted away from American blueprints and equipment models, would reject American product-lines and find alternatives in more hospitable metropolises. The second element was legitimacy: the complete exclusion (rather than class-based, "civilized" restriction) of the Chinese might undermine the minimal thresholds of goodwill required for ongoing influence and diffusion in China. A customer might buy your wares if he suspected you thought he was beneath you--this, of course, had been the case across the 19<sup>th</sup> century--but not if you slapped him across the face. If you did so, you courted serious backlash, with potentially crippling imperial consequences both overseas and domestically. Missionaries brought both arguments to their activism against exclusion: keeping out exempted Chinese would sever evangelical networks and sour promising converts on "Christian" America.<sup>42</sup>

It was never the goal of most imperial anti-exclusionists to change American perceptions of the Chinese, but making these arguments meant taking on nativist claims of wholesale Chinese barbarism directly.<sup>43</sup> Here anti-exclusionists made what they took to be careful class distinctions: elements of the Chinese population, they maintained, were "civilized," similar enough to Americans to be capable of consuming and diffusing American goods, practices and institutions. Baseline similarities and continuously expanding Chinese "wants" would produce a happy, upward spiral of "assimilation." Virtually any American who had spent time haggling with merchants, depending on compradors and interpreters or educating mission students would tell you that it was ridiculous not to make

distinctions of “civilization” among the Chinese.<sup>44</sup> Speaking to Congressional audiences, Tompkins had employed a striking but not atypical analogy to illustrate the importance of registering class distinctions among Chinese migrants. “Our answer,” he said, “is that we have to deal with two sets of people as wide apart as the upper and lower classes of China as we did deal in this country with two classes who were as far apart as the slaveowner and the slave.”<sup>45</sup>

Rather than engage in ethnographic re-education, imperial anti-exclusionists stressed expedience: the very real threats that over-enthusiastic and insufficiently discriminating immigration policies posed to U. S. interests in China, especially through a possible boycott. These fears were ratcheted up, and voiced more earnestly, in the era of Powderly and Sargent. As immigration officials began to non-exempt the exempted, AAA activism on the immigration front intensified. As John Foord, the AAA’s tireless secretary, put it in 1902: “When gentlemen representing two-thirds of the cotton mill capital of South Carolina make a special trip to Washington to appear before a Committee of Congress in opposition to more stringent measures of Chinese exclusion, and are reinforced by representatives of the mills of New England, of New York commission houses, and of the great exporting firms, it becomes evident that some new interests have become vitally concerned about the preservation of friendly relations with the Chinese Empire.”<sup>46</sup>

As Foord observed, notable among imperial anti-exclusionists were Southern politicians and industrialists; indeed Foord emphasized the presence of Southern delegations, perhaps as a pre-emptive strike against charges of racial sentimentalism. As mentioned previously, there was a materialist reason for the participation of Tompkins and other Southerners: cotton textiles were the U. S.’s leading export in China, and China was the single largest overseas consumer. When the masters of Jim Crow cotton production traveled to Washington in defense of the safe passage of Chinese people to and from the United States, you knew they thought the situation was serious.

#### IV. Irritating Consequences

Until 1905, imperial anti-exclusionists’ fears of Chinese retaliation had been largely hypothetical. When a full-scale boycott of U. S. products broke out throughout the Chinese diaspora in 1905-6, they took on a very palpable life. Alienated merchants and students played leading roles in the boycott within China itself and across Southeast Asia, leveling their critiques at both American anti-Chinese racism and, to a degree, at the failures of Qing diplomacy.<sup>47</sup> Interestingly, some protest literature explicitly took on the question of class, insisting that activists’ goal should not be the restoration of class exemption, but rather the eradication of barriers to both working-class and elite migration alike. In the 1907 protest novel *Golden World*, for example, Biheguan Zhuren recounts divisions in the boycott movement in Shanghai between academic circles that wanted to repeal

Chinese restriction, and business groups seeking only its modification. At a climactic moment, the novel's protagonist Zhang Shi, a beautiful, educated and progressive female activist--and a direct descendent of a Ming dynasty general--calls a meeting seeking to eliminate American restriction laws. Speaking before five hundred women in a rented theater, she employs a language of family to address, and dismiss, arguments for class-specific reform:

Sisters! Aren't we the mothers of Chinese citizens? ... In the eyes of a mother, there are only children, there are no classes/levels... Today we talk of boycott because foreigners have abused our overseas nationals. Of the overseas Chinese, workers are the most numerous, and they also suffer the most. If workers can get out of the bitter sea to the happy land, merchants and students will automatically have the same [opportunity]. If we revise the treaty in order to benefit the merchants and students only, workers will not have the same right. Sisters! Aren't they our children as well?<sup>48</sup>

The boycott presented Americans with interests in China with an actual contradiction between empire and exclusion of the kind they had feared since the 1880s. In its wake, AAA activism against the Powderly/Sargent exclusion policy gathered strength. In Spring 1905, the AAA's Foord arranged a meeting with President Theodore Roosevelt, urgently arguing for the necessity of restoring class restriction, rather than complete exclusion, as a function of U. S. commercial, political and educational power in China. Roosevelt was persuaded to adopt the class-restrictionist position, pressing his diplomats for a new treaty that would restore the pre-Powderly status quo, and when that failed (the Qing government was not interested in negotiating any more), advancing Congressional legislation that secured an explicit protection for the "exempt classes." When that failed despite pressure from the AAA, Roosevelt ultimately restored the exemptions by executive order, commanding a begrudging immigration bureaucracy to accept Section 6 certificates on arrival in the United States and imposing stiff penalties on U. S. officials for harassment, insult or abuse. Meanwhile, as a function of both U. S. and, ultimately, Qing suppression, and its own internal divisions, the boycott movement had declined, although additional protests would occur over the next several years. Undoubtedly, one factor in the end of the boycott had been the fact that a return to class-based, "civilized" restriction had been an acceptable outcome for large numbers of influential Chinese merchants (many of them involved in the boycott), if not for many student activists.<sup>49</sup>

As Roosevelt's intervention demonstrated, the executive branch was learning that the U. S. empire was not invulnerable, that immigration politics mattered for empire, and that, when it came to enforcement, federal immigration officials could still be subject to local, anti-Chinese agendas, with potentially catastrophic results. As would later presidents, Roosevelt had ultimately used the executive branch to centralize control of restriction in order to prevent another geopolitical disaster. The most concrete expression of this effort was the Angel Island immigration

station, founded in 1910. Here, aspirations for bureaucratic autonomy were written in water and land: while the station's professional civil servants were deliberately more politically remote from West Coast labor politics, its detention halls were, by geographic design, separated from the possible intervention of Chinese families and communities in San Francisco. This did not stop Chinese petitions and boycotts insisting on the right to legal counsel and translation during hearings and the right to testify on shore.<sup>50</sup>

After 1910, Chinese restriction was more methodical and procedural, physically hygienic, "courteous" in its practical execution, and rigorous in its exercise of class distinction (alongside citizenship and returnee status), than ever before. It was not always less corrupt, but it was less erratic and less permeable to outside pressure. For all this, it received praise from many who had criticized the seemingly arbitrary exercise of restrictive power under Powderly and Sargent. Here, at last, was something like a "civilized" restrictionist order, in two different senses. It respected what were legally (and, for many, geopolitically) necessary distinctions between "civilized" and "uncivilized" Chinese immigrants; it established its own "civilized" character through an obscure, technical and self-referential language of procedure. More than previously, this "civilized" system respected the dignitary rights of those few migrants presumed to have dignity.

### Conclusion

In my lecture today, I've made the case for an imperial history of the United States in the world and, specifically, for an imperial history of migration, using Chinese migration politics at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to illustrate the way this approach can reveal fresh, new facets of well-studied pasts. In closing, I'd suggest that this approach has far broader implications for the writing of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century histories. Take, for example, clashes between the United States and Japan over migration between 1905 and 1924. If the inter-imperial compromise that resulted, the "Gentlemen's Agreement," left Japan more power and standing than had similar conflicts with China (it avoided stigmatizing laws by Congress), the practical outcome--class-based restriction that barred workers while permitting entry to elites, within an overarching, racially stigmatizing framework--was strikingly similar.<sup>51</sup> While imperial history helps explain fractures in the edifice of anti-Asian restriction, it also sheds light on its ultimate dismantling during the Cold War, when its opponents argued that, as an element of the national origins quota system, it proved too rigid when it came to refugee admissions, and too offensive when it came to the pursuit of global legitimacy.<sup>52</sup> Seeing migration history through the lens of empire, I've suggested, will lead to richer research. But it may also shed light on our contemporary world, a world in which entrepreneurial elites from outside the United States (thought to enhance U. S. economic power) can effectively purchase entry rights through EB-5 visas, while working-class migrants (thought to threaten U. S. living standards) risk their lives,

and sometimes lose them, smuggled across the Pacific in container ships or hazarding the Arizona desert. If there are limits to the “transnational,” it is in part because it suggests an equivalence between these deeply unequal transits. If migration and empire belong together historiographically, it is in part because their entanglement is still with us.

## Notes

1. On Tompkins’ dialogues with European colonialists over the relationship between white rule and cotton production, see Erin Clune, “From Lightest Cooper to the Blackest and Lowest Type: Daniel Tompkins and the Racial Order of the Global New South,” *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (May 2010), pp. 275-314. While a detailed account of many of Tompkins’ global engagements, this essay does not note Tompkins’ participation in the politics of Chinese immigration.
2. See, for example, Najia Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans, and Racial Anxiety in the United States, 1848-82* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003). It is clear that many 19<sup>th</sup> century commentators drew equivalences and comparisons between African-Americans and the Chinese, especially when it came to questions of racialized dependent labor; my argument here is that in specific contexts--like debates about the relationship between exports to China and Chinese exclusion--these visions could also diverge.
3. For two different suggestions to bridge these historiographies, which inspire my own efforts, see George J. Sanchez, “Race, Nation, and Culture in Recent Immigration Studies,” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Summer 1999), pp. 66-84; Gordon H. Chang, “Asian Immigrants and American Foreign Relations,” in Warren Cohen and Akira Iriye, eds., *Pacific Passage: The Study of American-East Asian Relations on the Eve of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 103-118.
4. Among the key summions were Ian Tyrrell, “American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History,” *American Historical Review*, 96 (Oct. 1991), pp. 1031-55; David Thelen, “Of Audiences, Borderlands, and Comparisons: Toward the Internationalization of American History,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 79, No. 2 (September 1992), pp. 432-62; David Thelen, “The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 86, No. 3 (December 1999), pp. 965-75; Thomas Bender, “Historians, the Nation, and the Plenitude of Narratives,” in Bender, ed., *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 1-22. For rich discussions of transnational history for both the United States and globally, see, respectively, Daniel T. Rodgers, “American Exceptionalism Revisited,” *Raritan*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (2004), pp. 21-47; AHR Conversation, “On Transnational History,” *American Historical Review*, Vol. 111 (2006): 1441-64.
5. See, for example, Madeline Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration between the United States and South China, 1882-1943* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii, 1900-1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). For a methodological discussion of transnational paradigms for U. S.



- immigration history, see Donna Gabaccia, "Is Everywhere Nowhere? Nomads, Nations, and the Immigrant Paradigm of United States History," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 86 (1999), pp. 1115-34. For the social sciences, see Nina Glick-Schiller, "Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration," in Nina Glick-Schiller, Linda Basch and Christina Blanc-Szanton, *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration* (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1992), pp. 1-24.
6. See, especially, Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). For transnational approaches to social movements from a social science perspective, see Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
7. I discuss these themes in greater depth in Paul A. Kramer, "Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World," *American Historical Review*, forthcoming.
8. These estimates were by Ellison A. Smyth, a South Carolina textile industrialist, speaking before the Sub-committee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Journal of the American Asiatic Association*, Vol. VI, no. 3 (April 1906), p. 83. On this trade, see Kang Chao, "The Chinese-American Cotton-Textile Trade, 1830-1930," in Ernest May and John K. Fairbank, *America's China Trade in Historical Perspective: The Chinese and American Performance* (Cambridge: Committee on American-East Asian Relations of the Department of History, 1986), pp. 103-50. On Chinese merchants and U. S-Chinese trade, see Yong Chen, "Understanding Chinese American Transnationalism During the Early Twentieth Century: An Economic Perspective," in *Chinese American Transnationalism: The Flow of People, Resources, and Ideas between China and America During the Exclusion Era* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), pp. 156-73; Eve Armentrout Ma, "The Big Business Ventures of Chinese in North America, 1850-1930," in Genny Lim, ed., *The Chinese American Experience* (San Francisco: Chinese Historical Society of America, 1984), pp. 101-12.
9. "Statement of Mr. D. A. Tomkins, of Charlotte, N. C., Representing the National Association of Manufacturers," in *Journal of the American Asiatic Association*, April 1906, 74.
10. Among the key works in a rich historiography of Chinese restriction as law, politics and social experience, are Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Sucheng Chan, ed., *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Estelle T. Lau, *Paper Families: Identity, Immigration Administration, and Chinese Exclusion* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). For recent works that powerfully resituate Chinese restriction in global contexts, see Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Marilyn Lake and David Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Erika Lee, "Orientalisms in the Americas: A Hemispheric Approach to Asian American History," *Journal of Asian American Studies*, Vol. 8, Number 3 (October 2005), pp. 235-256; Kornel Chang, "Circulating Race and Empire: Transnational Labor Activism and the Politics of Anti-Asian Agitation in the Anglo-American Pacific World, 1880-1910,"

*Journal of American History*, Vol. 96, No. 3 (December 2009), pp. 678-701.

11. While the fact of class-based exemption is noted descriptively in most existing historiography, its analysis has been limited. For one treatment, see Lee, *At America's Gates*, pp. 87-92. For an older account that contains much material on the diplomatic politics of exemption that comprehends class-based restriction as the proper solution to Chinese-U. S. tensions, and therefore fails to submit it to analysis, see Delber McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door, 1900-1906: Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977). For one exception, that centers on the politics of exemption in the lives of Chinese merchants in the 1890s, see Brian Thornton, "Exceptions to the Rule: Chinese Merchants and the Exclusion Laws, 1890-1894," *Pacific Northwest Forum*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1992), pp. 50-9.
12. By far the most common name for the law, at least through 1888, was the "Chinese Restriction Act," based on a newspaper survey of the *Atlanta Constitution*; the *Baltimore Afro-American*; the *Chicago Tribune*; the *Los Angeles Times*; the *New York Times*, *New York Tribune*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Washington Post*. Early on, the title "Chinese Exclusion Act" was used defensively by anti-Chinese nativists: "exclusion" appears to have been used against perceived threats to law's strict enforcement. The first use of the term in these newspapers is in an August 1883 editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* attacking a decision in a Massachusetts court allowing a Chinese migrant entry into the United States as violating "the Chinese Exclusion Act" (which it called "a restriction law.") "The Boston Decision," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 23, 1883, p. 2. The term exploded in usage to refer to the Scott Act of October 1888, which would have barred Chinese laborers from returning to the United States and nullified their certificates of identity. From this point on, it was retroactively applied to the 1882 law, although the term "Chinese Restriction Act" was still used after 1900.
13. Helen Chen, "Chinese Immigration into the United States: An Analysis of Change in Immigration Policies" (PhD, Brandeis University, 1980), p. 181.
14. "Statement of Mr. D. A. Tomkins, of Charlotte, N. C., Representing the National Association of Manufacturers," p. 73.
15. While my focus here is the relationship between the United States and China, the British Empire faced similar dilemmas in squaring imperial diplomacy and white settler anti-Chinese exclusionism in Australia and Canada; it developed its own variants of imperial anti-exclusion as a result. See, especially, Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing a Global Colour Line*; R. A. Huttenback, *Racism and Empire: White Settlers and Coloured Immigrants in the British Self-Governing Colonies, 1830-1910* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976).
16. Rev. William Speer, *The Oldest and the Newest Empire: China and the United States* (Hartford, Conn., S. S. Scranton and Company, 1870).
17. On the United States' changing self-conception across the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, see Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995). For China at the turn of the century, see Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).
18. On the United States and the treaty ports, see Eileen Scully, *Bargaining with the State from Afar: American Citizenship in Treaty Port China, 1844-1942* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
19. On U.S. missions in China, see Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women*

- Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven, 1984); Xi Lian, *The Conversion of Missionaries: Liberalism in American Protestant Missions in China, 1907-1932* (University Park, 1997); John K. Fairbank, ed., *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974); Paul A. Varg, *Missionaries, Chinese, and Diplomats: The American Protestant Movement in China, 1890-1952* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958).
20. On U. S.-Chinese relations during this period, see Michael Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).
21. On the Burlingame Treaty, see John Schrecker, "For the Equality of Men – For the Equality of Nations": Anson Burlingame and China's First Embassy to the United States, 1868," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (2010), pp. 9-34.
22. For this approach, see Cheryl L. Cole, "Chinese Exclusion: The Capitalist Perspective of the 'Sacramento Union,' 1850-1882," *California History*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (1978), pp. 8-31.
23. For this argument, see Esther Baldwin, *Must the Chinese Go? An Examination of the Chinese Question* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1970 [1890]).
24. On the figure of the "coolie," see Moon-ho Jung, *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).
25. On the Chinese exclusion movement and the regional and national politics of Chinese exclusion see, especially Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); Elmer Sandmeyer, *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1939); Stuart Creighton Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).
26. On the diplomatic politics of the Angell Treaty, see Shih-Shan Henry Tsai, *China and the Overseas Chinese in the United States, 1868-1911* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1983); David L. Anderson, "The Diplomacy of Discrimination: Chinese Exclusion, 1876-1882," *California History*, Vol. 52 (Spring 1978), pp. 320-45.
27. On the politics of the 1882 act, see Gyory, *Closing the Gates*; Patrick and Shane Fisher, "Congressional Passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882," *Immigrants and Minorities*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (2001), pp. 58-74; Shirley Hune, "Politics of Chinese Exclusion: Legislative-Executive Conflict, 1876-1882," *Amerasia Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1982), pp. 5-27.
28. The remaining migrants were either native-born U. S. citizens of Chinese descent, or returning laborers, both of which had entry rights alongside the "exempt classes."
29. For a discussion of the problems of enforcing categories within Chinese restriction, see Kitty Calavita, "The Paradoxes of Race, Class, Identity, and 'Passing': Enforcing the Chinese Exclusion Acts, 1882-1910," *Law and Social Inquiry*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Winter 2000), pp. 1-40.
30. On Chinese women's migration and restriction, see Sucheng Chan, "The Exclusion of Chinese Women, 1870-1943," in Sucheng Chan, ed., *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943*, pp. 94-146; George Pepper, *If They Don't Bring Their Women Here: Chinese Female Migration before Exclusion* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999). On the role of gender in debates about Chinese immigration, see Karen J. Leong, "A Distant and Antagonist Race: Constructions of

- Chinese Manhood in the Exclusionist Debates, 1869-1878," in Matthew Basso, Laura McCall and Dee Garceau, *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the American West* (New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 131-48.
31. On Chinese perceptions of the United States in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see R. David Arkush and Leo Oufan Lee, *Land without Ghosts: Chinese Impressions of America from the Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); K. Scott Wong, "The Transformation of Culture: Three Views of America," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (June 1996), pp. 201-32; Chang-fang Chen, "Barbarian Paradise: Chinese Views of the United States, 1784-1911," (PhD dissertation, Indiana University, 1985); Merle Curti and John Stalker, "The Flowery Flag Devils: The American Image in China, 1840-1900," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 96, No. 6 (Dec. 20, 1952), pp. 663-90.
  32. On Chinese diplomacy and Chinese migrants in the United States, see Tsai, *China and the Overseas Chinese in the United States, 1868-1911*; Charles Desnoyers, "The Thin Edge of the Wedge: The Chinese Educational Mission and Diplomatic Representation in the Americas, 1872-5," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (1992): 241-63. On the CCBA, which both defended and surveilled Chinese migrants, and the practices of which were in many cases adopted by Chinese diplomats, see Yucheng Qin, *The Diplomacy of Nationalism: The Six Companies and China's Policy toward Exclusion* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009).
  33. Qinghuang Yan, *Coolies and Mandarins: China's Protection of Overseas Chinese during the Late Ch'ing Period (1851-1911)* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1985); Sing-wu Wang, "The Attitude of the Ch'ing Court Toward Chinese emigration," *Chinese Culture*, Vol. IX, no. 4 (December 1968), pp. 62-76; Yen Ching-hwang, "The Overseas Chinese and Late Ch'ing Economic Modernization," *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (April 1982), pp. 219-21. On Chinese diplomacy during this period more generally, see Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *China's Entrance into the Family of Nations: The Diplomatic Phase, 1858-1880* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960).
  34. Wu Ting-Fang, "Mutual Helpfulness between China and the United States," *North American Review*, Vol. CLXXI, No. DXXIV (July 1900), pp. 10-1. On Wu, see On Wu, see Linda Pomerantz-Zhang, *Wu Tingfang (1842-1922): Reform and Modernization in Modern Chinese History* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1992); Yen Ching-hwang, *Wu T'ing-Fang the Protection of the Overseas Chinese in the United States, 1897-1903* (Working Papers No. 12, University of Adelaide, Center for Asian Studies, 1981).
  35. On the Powderly/Sargent era, see Delber L. McKee, "'The Chinese Must Go!': Commissioner General Powderly and Chinese Immigration, 1897-1902," *Pennsylvania History*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (1997), pp. 37-51; McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, chapter 8; Lee, *At America's Gates*, 64-8.
  36. The literature on Chinese resistance to restriction laws, by means of law, social protest, and subversion, is extensive. See Charles McClain, Jr., *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Lucy Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*; Lee, *At America's Gates*, esp. chapters 5-6; K. Scott Wong and Suchen Chang, eds., *Claiming America: Constructing Chinese American Identities during the Exclusion Era* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998); Christian Fritz, "Due Process, Treaty Rights, and Chinese Exclusion, 1882-1891," in *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Linda Pomerantz, "The Chinese Bourgeoisie and the Anti-Chinese Movement in the

- United States, 1850-1905," *Amerasia* 11:1 (Spring/Summer 1984), pp. 1-34.
37. Ng Poon Chew, *The Treatment of the Exempt Classes of Chinese in the United States* (San Francisco: The Author, 1908). On Ng, see Corrine K. Hoexter, "Dr. Ng Poon Chew and the History of the Chinese in America," in *The Life, Influence and Role of the Chinese in the United States, 1776-1960* (San Francisco, 1976). On his newspaper, see Yumei Sun, "San Francisco's *Chung Sai Yat Po* and the Transformation of Chinese Consciousness, 1900-1920," in James Philip Danky, ed., *Print Culture in a Diverse America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), pp. 85-100.
38. The *New York Journal of Commerce*, representing the city's exporting interests, came out as an opponent of Chinese exclusion as early as the first national exclusion laws. See, for example: "A Blow at Sectionalism," April 10, 1882; "The Chinese Question," April 13, 1882; "Congressional Insincerity," May 1, 1882.
39. On the AAA generally, see James J. Lorence, "Organized Business and the Myth of the China Market: The American Asiatic Association, 1898-1937," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, Vol. 71, No. 4 (1981), pp. 1-112. On AAA activism on Chinese exclusion, see James J. Lorence, "Business and Reform: The American Asiatic Association and the Exclusion laws, 1905-1907," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (1970), pp. 421-38.
40. The exemplary subjects here were migrating students. On student migration in U. S. geopolitical imaginaries, see Paul A. Kramer, "Is the World Our Campus? International Students and U. S. Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 33, Issue 5 (November 2009), pp. 775-806. On Chinese students in the United States in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, see Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900-1927* (Stanford, 2001); Edward Qingjia Wang, "Guests from the Open Door: The Reception of Chinese Students into the United States, 1900s-1920s," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Spring 1994), pp. 55-75.
41. "The Profit of Broad-Mindedness," *Wall Street Journal*, July 21, 1908, 1.
42. The exemplary figure here for the period under study was Luella Miner, an Oberlin missionary who objected to the harassment of two Chinese student-converts at the turn of the century, largely on the grounds of its cost to the missionary effort. Luella Miner, "American Barbarism and Chinese Hospitality," *Outlook*, December 27, 1902, pp. 984-5.
43. Many missionaries took the goal of changing American images of the Chinese more seriously than their corporate counterparts, however. See Jennifer C. Snow, *Protestant Missionaries, Asian Immigrants, and Ideologies of Race in America, 1850-1924* (New York: Routledge, 2007). While it treats missionary arguments against "scientific racism" well, I believe this work underplays the imperial and instrumental character of this activism, as well as its political limitations.
44. On compradors, see Yen-P'ing Hao, *The Comprador in Nineteenth Century China: Bridge Between East and West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).
45. "Statement of Mr. D. A. Tomkins, of Charlotte, N. C., Representing the National Association of Manufacturers," p. 72.
46. John Foord, "The Business Aspects of Chinese Exclusion," *New York Times*, February 9, 1902, 24.
47. On the boycott, see Sin-Kiong Wong, *China's Anti-American Boycott Movement in 1905: A Study in Urban Protest* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002); Guanhua Wang, *In Search of Justice: The 1905-1906 Chinese Anti-American Boycott* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard



- University Asia Center, 2001); McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, chapter 11; Tsai, *Chinese and the Overseas Chinese*, chapter 5; Linda Pappageorge, "American Diplomats Response to Chinese Nationalism: China's Anti-American Boycott, 1905-1906; for Patriotism or Profit?" in *Proceedings and Papers of the Georgia Association of Historians* (1983), pp. 98-110; Jane Leong Larson, "The Chinese Empire Reform Association (Bao-huanghui) and the 1905 Anti-American Boycott: The Power of a Voluntary Association," in Susie Lan Cassel, ed., *The Chinese in America: From the Gold Mountain to the New Millennium* (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 2002); Delber McKee, "The Chinese Boycott of 1905-1906 Reconsidered: The Role of Chinese-Americans," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (May 1986), pp. 165-91. On public opinion and "civil society" in late Qing society, see William T. Rowe, "The Problem of 'Civil Society' in Late Imperial China," *Modern China*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (April 1993), pp. 139-57; Akira Iriye, "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: The Case of Late Ch'ing China" in Albert Feuerwerker, Rhoads Murphey and Mary C. Wright, eds., *Approaches to Modern Chinese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 216-37.
48. *Golden World*, in A Ying, ed., *Huagong Jinyue Wenxue Ji* [A Collection of Literature against the United States Treaty Excluding Chinese Labor] (Shanghai, 1962), p. 176. Translation from the original Chinese by Belinda Huang.
  49. On the diplomacy surrounding the boycott, see McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door, 1900-1906*, chapters 7-14.
  50. On Angel Island, see Erika Lee and Judy Yung, *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Lee, *At America's Gates*, 127-31; Robert Barde and Gustavo J. Bobonis, "Detention at Angel Island: First Empirical Evidence," *Social Science History*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Spring 2006), pp. 103-36.
  51. On tensions over Japanese immigration and the Gentleman's Agreement, see Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (New York, 1969).
  52. Michael G. Davis, "Impetus for Immigration Reform: Asian Refugees and the Cold War," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, Vol. 7, No. 3-4 (1998), pp. 127-56; Madeline Hsu, "Befriending the Yellow Peril: Chinese Students and Intellectuals and the Liberalization of U.S. Immigration Laws, 1950-65," *Journal of American East Asian Relations*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (November 2009), pp. 139-162.